

Program #2 Care Team Special Projects Program Overview

In response to the growing need for behavioral health (BH) providers in community health center (CHC) settings, the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers (MassLeague) is partnering with Mass General Brigham (MGB) to attract and retain BH providers and increase BH access in Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities in Boston's Blue Hill Avenue corridor and other underserved communities across the state.

The **Care Team Special Projects Program** (Special Projects Program) offers CHC BH providers salary incentives and the opportunity to work as a team to design and implement a special project focused on behavioral health. Awardees must commit to two additional years, post project, of full-time practice at their CHC.

Eligibility

This program is open to Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNPs), LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and LADC1s working within a CHC. All applicants must be willing to commit to: 1) completing their one-year special project as a part of a care team; and 2) working an additional two years at their CHC after completion of the project in a full-time capacity as defined by the organization.

Any service obligation to the National Health Service Corp, the MDPH State Loan Repayment Program, or other loan repayment programs must be completed to be eligible for this program. If the provider is part of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the provider is eligible to receive this funding.

General Description

The Special Projects Program will provide up to \$40,000 in special project funding for CHCs to participate in a special project team for behavioral health care providers inclusive of Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNPs), LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and/or LADC1s to work together over the course of one year to implement a project focused on behavioral health within their CHC (e.g., trauma informed care, pediatric psychiatry, etc.). The special project care team will be comprised of no fewer than two and no more than four behavioral health providers. Following the completion of the one-year special project, the team will begin their two-years of obligated service in exchange for salary supplement stipends. Psychologists and Psychiatrists will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$100,000 paid out in two \$50,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. PMHNPs, LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and LADC1s will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$40,000 paid out in two \$20,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. Total number of awardees through this program will vary based on number of applications received, size of the care team, and care team provider types.

Special Project Funding

The Special Projects Program will provide up to \$40,000 in special project funding for CHCs to participate in a special project team for behavioral health care providers inclusive of Psychologists, Psychiatrists, PMHNPs, LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and/or LADC1s to work together over the course of one year to implement a project focused on behavioral health within their CHC (e.g., trauma informed care, pediatric psychiatry, etc.). The special project care team will be comprised of no fewer than two and no more than four behavioral health providers. Additional support, administrative, or staff outside of the eligible behavioral health provider types are not included in the minimum or maximum number of the care team. For the awarded projects, funds will be paid directly to the organization to support the approved salary, fringe benefits, taxes, and other project expenses as detailed in the project budget. Organizations that do not use the funding for the approved purpose stated in their applications will be required to reimburse MassLeague the full award amount. If awarded, no aspect of the Special Projects Program funding may duplicate funds provided through other revenue streams (e.g., billable services, third party payers for services, start-up or infrastructure funding, etc.). The care team will be required to submit quarterly reports outlining advances towards identified milestones, any obstacles/challenges encountered, and a budget report. Following the completion of the one-year project term, each care team will deliver a presentation to the program cohort and/or other medium (i.e., MassLeague Community Health Institute conference) detailing their goals, experiences, outcomes, and lessons learned.

Salary Supplements

Following the completion of the one-year special project, the care team will begin their two-years of obligated service in exchange for salary supplement stipends. Psychologists and Psychiatrists will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$100,000 paid out in two \$50,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. PMHNPs, LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and LADC1s will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$40,000 paid out in two \$20,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. The MassLeague will provide support and/or provide guidance should CHCs have questions regarding the mechanism of distributing funds to the providers.

Selection Criteria

Care teams interested in participating in this program must submit their application to the MassLeague at SpecialProjects@massleague.org. Applications will be reviewed by a committee with representation from Mass General Brigham, MassLeague, and other experts in the field of community-based primary care and behavioral health. Selection criteria will include but not be limited to: focus on behavioral health, commitment to a career working in community settings and work in communities of need; experience and demonstrated service to underserved communities or special populations; volunteer and leadership activities; geographic distribution of applicants with priority given to providers working within BIPOC communities; linguistic and cultural competency; and availability of funds.

Underrepresented providers representing a diverse population, including but not limited to, racial/ethnic minorities (i.e., Black or African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Native American), individuals from rural communities, and providers who are linguistically diverse are encouraged to apply.

Application Requirements

To be considered for the Special Projects Program managed by the MassLeague, applications must be submitted to SpecialProjects@massleague.org by August 26, 2022 at 5 PM.

Only complete applications received by the application deadline will be considered.

Review Process

Due to limited funding and high demand, the Special Projects Program is highly competitive. The review process includes:

- (1) Confirmation of receipt that the application and supporting materials were submitted successfully. NOTE: this notification does *not* confirm that all materials were complete or supplied correctly.
- (2) Following the application deadline, an internal audit of all applications and materials will be conducted. NOTE: There will not be an opportunity to submit any missing information – if an application is submitted with missing or incomplete information, the application will not be eligible for review by the Review Committee.
- (3) Notification of the Review Committee’s decision on the application.
- (4) For successful applications, processing of all official Special Projects Program required documents, including the contract.

<i>Application Deadline</i>	Friday, August 26, 2022, by 5 PM
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Implementation

The start date of the projects through the Special Projects Program will be included in the award announcement and will be confirmed when the contract is signed and executed by the participant, their organization’s CEO or equivalent, and the MassLeague’s President and CEO or his designee. Following the execution of the contract, the special project funding will be disbursed directly to the CHC. Upon the successful completion of the one-year special project and receipt of the required quarterly reports and budgets, the two-year obligated service term for the care team will begin. Each care team will also be required to deliver a presentation to the program cohort and/or other medium (i.e., MassLeague Community Health Institute conference) detailing their goals, experiences, outcomes, and lessons learned. Providers will receive their first salary supplement stipend after the completion of their first year of obligated service and employment verification from their CHC. Providers will receive their second salary supplement stipend after the completion of their second year of obligated service and employment verification from their CHC. Salary supplement stipends will be sent to the provider’s CHC organization which will be responsible for providing it directly to the awardee. The MassLeague does not provide specific tax advice and the participant should anticipate the need to seek independent tax advice to determine the tax status of the salary supplement.

Participant Requirements

Under the Special Projects Program, it is required that participating providers complete their one-year special project and all related requirements, and commit to working at their CHC full-time, as defined by their organization, for a period of two years following special project completion. The Special Projects Program will award up to \$40,000 per special project. Psychologists and Psychiatrists will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$100,000 paid out in two \$50,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. PMHNPs, LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and LADC1s will be eligible for a salary supplement of up to \$40,000 paid out in two \$20,000 disbursements over their two years of obligated service. The goal of this program is to increase behavioral health access in Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities, by addressing the shortage of Psychologists, Psychiatrists, PMHNPs, LCSWs, LICSWs, LMHCs, LMFTs, and LADC1s in CHCs across Massachusetts through project-based professional opportunities and salary supplements.

Contact Information

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